



ULTRA-COOL  
LOCAL TRIO BRINGS ROCKABILLY  
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Wintry mix  
High 38 Low 35  
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SINCE 1855

# The Express-Times

EASTON AREA EDITION

THE LEHIGH VALLEY'S FASTEST GROWING NEWSPAPER

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State’s former top cop lax  
on sex offenders, suit claims

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — A civil suit accuses the former commander of the Pennsylvania State Police of tolerating sexual misconduct “at the highest levels.”

Of 104 allegations of sexual misconduct, three involved high-ranking officers who went unpunished or were allowed to retire by then-Commissioner Paul J. Evanko, according to the court papers filed earlier this year.

The case stems from the depart-

ment’s handling of former Trooper Michael K. Evans, who pleaded guilty in 2000 to a string of sex crimes committed against six women during his four years on the job.

Before becoming a trooper, Evans had served as a Lehigh County deputy sheriff and part-time Hellertown police officer.

The plaintiffs say Evans, accused of inappropriate sexual behavior in previous jobs, should never have been hired and supervisors failed to discipline him when complaints began.

“Evanko ... tolerated sexual mis-

THE DETAILS

◆ The case stems from the department’s handling of former Trooper Michael K. Evans, a one-time Lehigh County deputy sheriff and part-time Hellertown police officer, who pleaded guilty in 2000 to a string of sex crimes committed on the job.

conduct at the highest levels of the Pennsylvania State Police,” said attorney Thomas Sheridan, who represents four women sexually assaulted by Evans during the 1990s.

Please see **SEX** /A-2

State professors eye strike

Union representing teachers at 14 state colleges to announce their intentions today.

By KURT BRESSWEIN  
The Express-Times

Working without a contract since June 30, 2003, faculty at Pennsylvania’s 14 state universities planned to announce today whether they are going on their first-ever strike.

Each university has contingency plans in case of a faculty strike, a spokesman for the State System of

Higher Education said. The plans are meant to keep campuses operating and safe and to ensure the system’s more than 104,000 students do not lose time toward completing their degrees.

Today’s announcement follows months of failed negotiations between state system officials and representatives of the faculty union, the Association of Pennsylvania State College and University

Faculties. Those negotiations continued Thursday, state system spokesman Thomas Gluck said.

APSCUF President William E. Fulmer scheduled a news conference for today in the union’s Harrisburg headquarters. Fulmer had postponed the announcement from Wednesday.

Chuck Bauerlein, an assistant professor at West Chester University, wrote on APSCUF’s Web site that Fulmer is expected to announce whether a strike would occur.

The union’s spokesman did not

Please see **STRIKE** /A-2

# Bridge price tag estimated at \$6M

Crossover lanes expected to open next week, ending detour.

By ALYSSA YOUNG  
The Express-Times

NAZARETH — Northbound motorists on Route 33 between Routes 248 and 191 will drive on a brand new, single-span, \$6 million bridge by the end of the summer, Pennsylvania Secretary of Transportation Allen D. Biehler forecasted Thursday.

The cost is an estimate, the design is still in the works and the accelerated timeline is “unusual,” Biehler told a crowd of about 60 people during a two-hour afternoon meeting at the Memorial Library of Nazareth and Vicinity.

The gathering of legislators, state and local officials, merchants, residents and others spilled outside the doorways of the library’s Fraunfelder Room. Outside, tractor-trailers rumbled through the four-way stop at East Center and North New streets.

Traveling along the borough’s

modest streets, the rigs were following a detour that has been in place since Jan. 24, when a sinkhole beneath the Route 33 bridge over the Bushkill Creek in Palmer Township forced the span to close.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation decided the sagging bridge must be replaced because beams supporting its deck were damaged when they dropped several inches into the gaping sinkhole, Biehler said. Nyleve Bridge Corp. of Emmaus is removing the bridge in pieces.

During a project update Thursday, Biehler said PennDOT expects to open two crossover lanes that will end the slow-moving detour on Monday or Wednesday, depending on the weather.

The crossover lanes will allow northbound Route 33 traffic to remain on the highway by crossing the median into one of the two southbound lanes, bypassing the

Please see **BRIDGE** /A-2



Express-Times photo/JIM MIDDLEKAUFF

Addressing a standing-room-only crowd at the Memorial Library of Nazareth and vicinity, state Secretary of Transportation Allen D. Biehler said he’s granted the Route 33 bridge project “emergency” status to speed up the construction process.

## Team to search for sinkhole’s ‘trigger’

By ALYSSA YOUNG  
The Express-Times

State officials and experts are forming a team to study widespread sinkhole problems like those that destroyed the northbound Route 33 bridge.

The team will develop solutions to minimize future danger and destruction, officials said at a meeting Thursday afternoon.

A task force Thursday morning toured a sinkhole-plagued area along 1.5 miles of the Bushkill Creek to witness current conditions, said Joe Brogna, a manager with the state Department of Environmental Protection.

On Jan. 24, a sinkhole opened beneath one of the piers supporting the north-

“It’s becoming more apparent now that (the sinkholes) may be interconnected.”

Sharon Hill,  
DEP geologist

bound Route 33 bridge that spans the Bushkill Creek between Routes 248 and 191. The bridge now must be replaced, and officials expect this will take about six months and \$6 million.

But the Route 33 bridge debacle is only the most recent in a string of local sinkhole calamities.

◆ “Sinks” have opened in the shoulders and median of the highway in the past. They stretch from Palmer Town-

ship to Bethlehem Township and follow the Route 33 corridor, even prompting unanswered questions about whether building the highway caused the craters.

◆ In October 2000, a sinkhole collapsed the Bushkill Street bridge spanning the Bushkill Creek between Stockertown and Tatamy.

◆ In 2001, another damaged the Norfolk Southern railroad trestle over the creek, on the southeast border of Hercules Cement Company’s property.

◆ In December 2002, the Sarkady family packed their belongings and left their home on Babbling Brook Road in Palmer Township because a half-dozen sinkholes had opened in their yard along the same stream.

Please see **SINKHOLES** /A-2



Express-Times photo/JIM MIDDLEKAUFF

State Sen. Lisa Boscola, above, asked Biehl, right, what elected officials can do to support the bridge project.



## CIA never called Iraq an imminent threat

Tenet defends intelligence, tries to duck scapegoat tag.

By KATHERINE PFLEGER  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Intelligence analysts never told President Bush before the invasion of Iraq that Saddam Hussein’s rule posed an imminent threat, CIA Director George Tenet said Thursday in a heated defense of agency findings central to the decision to go to war.

The urgency of the Iraqi threat was Bush’s main argument for the war. But the president said Thursday he still would have invaded Iraq if he’d known no weapons stockpiles existed — adding a new element to the much-debated question of whether the United States went to war based on faulty assumptions.

Tenet, addressing such questions for the first time after weeks of silence, acknowledged analysts believed before the war that Saddam had chemical and biological weapons, although none have been found. He said he believes some of what U.S. intelligence predicted about Iraq will turn out

Please see **TENET** /A-2



AP photo

Some intelligence will probably turn out to be right, while some will likely be wrong, CIA boss George Tenet said.

## Doctors support Specter, despite his views on caps

By LARA JAKES JORDAN  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A Pennsylvania doctors’ group has endorsed Sen. Arlen Specter in the Republican primary battle for the U.S. Senate, even though it disagrees with him on a key issue in the fight over medical malpractice reform.

The political arm of the Pennsylvania Medical Society voted 20-2 to endorse Specter over Rep. Pat Toomey in the state’s April 27 primary. Toomey, the Medical Society and President Bush are allied in the push for Congress to impose a \$250,000 cap on so-called “pain and suffering” jury awards to victims of medical negligence.

But Specter would not support caps

in egregious malpractice cases — like severe bodily impairment, disfigurement or death. Moreover, he favors a flexible cap that would let states set limits for pain and suffering damages.

“This endorsement is a big boost to my campaign,” Specter said in an announcement Thursday.

Pennsylvania is one of a dozen states in the country where experts say malpractice lawsuits have reached crisis proportions. Over the last year, doctors across the state have temporarily shut down their practices to protest skyrocketing insurance premiums they say are caused by huge monetary awards to medical negligence victims.

The chairman of the Medical Society

Please see **DOCTORS** /A-2



Toomey



Specter

### I N S I D E



**Changing the rules**  
Ruling favoring Ohio State’s Maurice Clarett may open the door for underclassmen in the NFL.  
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